DECLARATION
of the Lords and Commons

Assembled in

PARLIAMENT,

Setting forth the Grounds and Reasons, that necessitate them at this time to take up defensive Armes for the Preservation of His *Majesties* Person, The maintenance of the true Religion, the Lawes and Liberties of this Kingdome, and the Power and Priviledges of Parliament.

Ordered by the Commons in *Parliament*, that this Declaration be forthwith Printed and published.

Hen. Elsing, Cler. *Parl. D. Com.*

August 3.

Printed at *London*, for *Thomas Bankes*, and *William Lee*, 1642.

A Declaration of the Lords and Commons now Assembled in *Parliament*.

WE the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament having taken into consideration the present State & Condition of imminent danger, in which the Kingdom now stands, by reason of a malignant Party, prevailing with his Majesty; putting Him upon violent and perrillous waies, and now in Arms against us, to the hazarding of his Majesties Person; and for the oppression of the true Religion, the Laws and Liberties of this Kingdome, and the Power and Privilege of Parliament. All which, every honest man is bound to defend; especially those who have taken the late Protestation, By which they are more particularly engadged unto, and the more answerable before God, should they neglect it: Wherefore, we finding our selves ingaged in a necessity, to take up Armes likewise for the defence of these, which otherwise must suffer and perish; And having used all good waies and meanes to prevent extremities, and preserve the peace of the Kingdome (which good indeavours of ours, the malignitie of our enemies hath rendred altogether successelesse and vain;) Doe now think fit to give this account unto the World, to be a satisfaction unto all men, of the Justice of our proceedings, and a warning unto those, who are involved in the same danger with us, to let them see the necessity, and duty which lyes upon them, to save themselves, their Religion, and Country; For which purpose, wee set out this ensuing Declaration.

THat it appeares by the Answer which his Majesty hath given to the humble Petition for peace, presented unto Him by both Houses of Parliament, and those demands which He makes, That the designe which hath but so long carried on alter the frame and constitution of this Government both in Church and State, is now come to ripenesse; and the Contrivers of it, conceive themselves arrived to that condition of strength, that they shall be able to put it in present execution.

For, What else can be signified by the demanding of *Hull*, the Fleet; and the Magazine to be immediately delivered up, All our preparations of force to cease, And the defensive Armes of the Parliament to be laid down; And the Parliament to be adjourned to another place; then, That wee should out of the sence of our owne inability to make resistance, yeild our selves to the cruell Mercy of those who have poisoned the King against us,

us, and incited Him to violate all the Priviledges, and revile the Persons and Proceedings of the Parliament; or else, if (as it cannot be otherwise conceived) we do not grant what is so unreasonable and destructive, forthwith to bring on that force which is prepared against us, by the concurrence and assistance of Papists, an ambitious and discontented Clergy, Delinquents obnoxious to the Justice of Parliament, and some ill affected Persons of the Nobility and Gentry; who out of their desire of a dissolute liberty apprehend, and would keep off the Reformation intended by the Parliament.

These Persons have conspired together to ruine this Parliament, which alone hath set a stop to that violence so long intended; and often attempted for the Alteration of Religion, and subversion of the Laws and Liberties of the Kindome.

How far we were plung'd in a miserable expectation of most evill dayes, and how fast this growing mischiefe prevailed upon us before the Parliament, needs not now be declared, it being so fresh and bleeding in every mans memory; Religion was made but forme, and outside; and those who made conscience to maintain the substance and purity of it, Whether Clergy, or others, were discountenanced and oppressed, as the great enemies of the State. The Laws were no defence, nor protection of any mans right, all was subject to will and power, which imposed what payments they thought fit, to drain the Subjects purse, and supply those necessities, which their ill Counsels had brought upon the King, or gratifie such as were instruments in promoting those illegall, and oppressive courses. They who yeelded and complyed, were countenanced and advanced, all others disgraced and kept under: That so mens minder made poor and base, and their Liberties lost and gone, they might be ready to let go their Religion, whensoever it should be resolved to alter it; which was, and still is the great designe, and all else made use of, but as instrumentary and subservient to it.

When they conceived the way to be sufficiently prepared, They at last resolved to put on their Master-peice in Scotland, (where the same method had been followed) and more boldly to unmask themselves, in imposing upon them a Popish service Booke, for, well they knew the same Fate attended both Kingdomes, and Religion could not be altered in the one, without the other. God raised the Spirits of that Nation to oppose it, with so much zeale and indignation, That it kindled such a flame, as no expedient could bee found, but a Parliament here to quench it.

This necessity brought on this Parliament, and the same necessity gave it in the beginning power to act with more vigour and resolution, then former Parliaments had done, And to set upon a reformation of the great disorders, both in the Ecclesiasticall, and Civill state, which drew a more particular envy, and odium upon it, than was usuall to the generality of Parliaments, and was a cause, that those, who had swallowed up in their thoughts, our Religion and Liberties, and now saw themselves defeated by this meanes, bended all their endeavours, and raised all their forces to destroy it.

First, whilst the Scottish Army remayned here, they endeavoured to incense the two Nations, and engage their Armies one against the other, that in such a confusion as

needs must have followed, the Parliament might not be able to sit, and those forces destroying one another, might open some opportunity for them to gain their ends upon both Kingdomes; and that then as their need, so the being of the Parliament might cease. The wisedom of the Parliament prevented that mischiefe, and composed those great differences betwixt the King and the Kingdome of Scotland; that plot failing, They endeavoured to turne the English Army against the Parliament: This was discovered, The chiefe Actors fled, and the danger avoided. Then they labour to stir up the Scottish Army against us, but such was the faithfulnesse and affection of those our Brethren, that they could not affect it.

After this they carry the King into Scotland, to try if a Party could be there raysed to suppresse first, the good party in that Kingdome, and so compasse their intended purpose here. At the same time, the Rebellion in Ireland, an egge likewise of their hatching; breaks out, but their plot failed in Scotland; yet upon hopes of successe there, such preparatives were here, and such recourse of ill affected Persons to this Town, that the Parliament thought it necessary for their own security to have a guard. The King upon his returne instantly dismisses that guard, and puts another upon us, which produced such ill effects, as wee were glad to dismisse them, and rather runne any hazard then have such a Guard.

Thus left naked, presently some Members of both Houses are unjustly charged with Treason; and the King comes with a Troop of Cavaliers to the House of Commons, to fetch away those by force, whom he had caused to be so unjustly accused; The greatest violation of the Priviledges of Parliament, that ever was attempted, and so manifest a destruction of the right of the Subject, which is onely preserved by Parliament. That the City of London tooke a pious and generous resolution, to guard the Parliament themselves; which so grieved and enraged those wicked Persons, who had engaged the King in that last, and all those other Designes and Practises against the Parliament: That they make him forsake White-hall, under pretence that His Person was there in danger; a suggestion as false as the Father of lyes can invent.

Then doe they worke upon him and upon the Queen, perswade her to returne out of the Kingdome and carry him further and further from the Parliament, and so possesse him with a hatred of it, that they cannot put words bitter enough into his mouth, to expresse it upon occasions; They make him crosse, oppose, and enveigh against all the proceedings of Parliament encourage and protect all those who will affront it, take away all power and authority from it, to make it contemptible and of lesse esteem than the meanest Court, draw away the Members, commanding them to come to him to *York*, and in stead of discharging their duty in the service of the Parliament, to contribute their advice and assistance to the destruction of it, endeavour to possesse the people, that the Parliament will take away the Law, and introduce an Arbitrary Government; a thing which every honest Morall man abhors, much more the Wisdome, Iustice, and Piety of the two Houses of Parliament; and in truth such a charge, as no Rationall man can beleeve it, it being unpossible so many severall persons, as the two Houses of Parliament consist of, about 600.

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and in either House all of equall power, should all of them, or at least the *major part*, agree in Acts of Will and Tyranny which make up an Arbitrary Government; and most improbable that the Nobility, and chief Gentry of this Kingdome, should conspire to take away the Law, by which they enjoy their Estates, are Protected from any Acts of Violence, and Power, and differenced from the meaner sort of people, with whom otherwise they would be but fellow-servants.

To make all this good upon the Parliament; and either make the Kingdome believe it, or so awe it, as no body shall dare to say the contrary; forces is prepared, men are levied, and the Malignant party of the Kingdome as was before specified, that is, Papists, and Prelaticall Clergie, Delinquents, and that part of the Nobility and Gentry, which either feare Reformation, or seeke preferment by betraying their Country, to serve the Court, have combined to bury the happinesse of this Kingdome, in the ruine of this Parliament, and by forcing it, to cut up the freedome of Parliament by the root, and either take all Parliaments away, or which is worse, make them the instruments of slavery, to confirme it by Law, and leave the disease incurable.

That done, then come they to crowne their worke, and put that in execution, which was first in their intention, that is, the changing of Religion into Popery and Superstition.

All this while the two Houses of Parliament have with all duty and loyalty still applyed themselves unto His Majesty, and laboured by humble prayers, and cleare and convincing Reasons and Arguments in severall Petitions, to satisfie him of their intentions, the justnesse of their proceedings, their desire of the safety of his Royall Person, and of the peace of the Kingdome.

And onely to preserve that Peace, and prevent the pernicious practises of these Incendiaries, (such as the Lord *Digby*, who at first perswaded the King to get into some strong place, that he might protect those, whom he stiled the Kings Servants, but in truth such as doe divide Him from His Parliament and Kingdome, and might be revenged upon His Parliament, where he said Traytors bare that sway, who in the meane time promised he would doe him service abroad, which by his owne Letters appeares to be the procuring of supplyes against the Kingdome and Parliament, with which he himselfe said he would returne, as since hee hath done disguised, with store of Arms, in the Ship called The *Providence*; And who had attempted upon the Kings first going from *White Hall*, to raise some numbers of horse and foot under the Colour of a Guard for His Majesty, to be the foundation of an Army against the Parliament, which then failing, hath since taken effect, and shewes what was then in their thoughts, before *Hull*, or the *Militia*, or any thing else of that nature was in question) the Parliament thought fit to secure *Hull*, least it might be a receptacle of such ill-affected persons, and of what ayd could be gotten from Forraigne parts, the Fleet under the Earle of *Warwick*, to defend the

Kingdome, and prevent such mischiefe from abroad; the Magazin of Armes, that they should not be imployed against Vs, and the *Militia* of the Kingdome in such hands, as the Parliament might confide in, to suppresse commotions within ourselves.

And how necessary all this was to be done, the succeeding designes and practises upon them, all doe sufficiently manifest: and great cause hath the whole Kingdome to blesse God, who put it into the heads and hearts of the Parliament to take care of these particulars. For were these pernicious persons about the King masters of them, how easie would it be for them to master the Parliament, and master the Kingdome? And what could we expect but ruine and destruction from such masters, who make the King in this manner revile, and detest Vs and our Actions, such, who have embarqued Him in so many designes to overthrow this Parliament, such, who have so long thirsted to see Religion and Liberty confounded together?

Let the world now judge, what more could be done by Vs than we have done to appease His Majesty, and regaine his Grace and Favour, if (after the preventing of such a Petition as the last was, so full of submisse, humble, affectionate desires of Peace, so full of Duty and Loyalty, as we thought malice it selfe could not have accepted against it? And having received so sharpe a return, such expressions of bitternesse, a justification and avowed protection of Delinquents from the hand of Justice demands of so apparent danger, such manifestations of an intention to destroy Vs, and with Vs the whole Kingdome, and this more clearely evidenced by their subsequent Actions, even since these propositions have bin made unto Vs from His Majesty, over-running severall Counties, compelling the Trained Bands by force to come in and joyne with them, or disarming them, and putting their Armes into the hands of lewd and desperate persons, thereby turning the Armes of the Kingdom against it self) it be not fit for Vs, not onely not to yeild to what is required, but also to make further provision, for the preservation of Our selves, and of those who have sent Vs hither, and intrusted Vs with all they have, Estate, Liberty, and Life, and that which is the life of their lives, their Religion, and even for the safety of the Kings Person now environed by those, who carry Him upon His owne ruine, and the destruction of all His people: At least to give them warning, that all this is in danger: That if the King may force this Parliament, they may bid farewell to all Parliaments, from ever receiving good by them; and if Parliaments be lost, they are lost: Their Laws are lost, as well those lately made, as in former times, all which will be cut in sunder, with the same sword now drawne for the destruction of this Parliament.

Then if they will not come to helpe the Parliament, and save themselves, though both they and we must perish, yet have We discharged Our Consciences, and delivered Our Soules, and We will looke for a reward in Heaven, should We be so ill requited upon

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Earth, by those of whom We have so well deserved; which We cannot feare, having found upon all occasions such reall Demonstrations of their love and affection, and of their right understanding and apprehension of Our and their common danger, especially now, that the Question is so clearely stated, and that it appeareth that neither Hull, nor the Militia, nor the Magazine are the grounds of the War which is so furiously driven on against us, but the Malignant party of Papists, those who call themselves Cavaliers, and other ill-affected persons; but so far forth only as the Parliament and all the Members of both Houses, and all other persons who have shewed themselves forward for the defence of the true Religion, the Laws and Liberties of the Kingdome, and the just power and priviledges of Parliament are preserved and secured thereby.

For the many Affronts upon the Parliament above mentioned, the attempts to be possessed of Hull, and of the Magazine, by sending thither Captaine Legg a Delinquent to the Parliament, for having had a hand in the treasonable practise to bring up the Army against us, and the Earle of New-Castle *in a disguised habit, which was a pursuance of the Lord* Digbies *advice, and the endeavouring to raise forces under pretence of a Guard to the Kings Person in the winter.*

All this before we medled with *Hull*, or Magazin, or *Militia*, shew plainly that Our Act in securing them, was not the cause of the Kings taking up Arms, and exercising hostilities upon His loving and loyall Subjects, which was in the thoughts and endeavours of those about the King, who then had, and still have the greatest influence upon his Counsells, before We thought of *Hull* or *Militia*, or any thing else of that nature. And then, that our resigning of them now, would not Prevail with Him to make him lay downe His Armes, and returne to His Parliament, to gratifie the earnest and longing desires of his people, to enjoy His presence, favour and protection: But that if He could recover either by our Resignation, or any other way, pieces of so much advantage to him, and weakning to Vs, use would be made of them to Our infinite prejudice and ruine, the intention being still the same, not to rest satisfied with having *Hull* or taking away the Ordinance of the *Militia*; But to destroy the Parliament, and be masters of Our Religion and Liberties: to make Vs slaves, and alter the Government of this Kingdome, and reduce it to the condition of some other Countries, which are not governed by Parliaments, and so by Laws, but by the Will of the Prince, or rather of those who are about him.

Yet willingly would we give His Majesty satisfaction in those particulars (and so have we offered it) could we be secured, that disarming our selves, and delivering them up to His Majesty, (as the sword of Iustice is already put into the hands of divers Popish, and other ill-affected persons by putting them into the Commissions of the Peace, and other Commissions, and putting out others that are well affected) so we should not for our owne destruction put the Military sword into the hands of those evill Counsellours, and ill-affected persons, who are so

prevalent

correspondence with his Majesty, Papists many of them, or very late Converts, by colour of Oaths of Supremacie and Allegiance, for which they may very well have a dispensation or Indulgence, as we conceive thereby to promote so great a service for the Popish Party as to destroy the two Houses of Parliament, and through their sides, the Protestant Religion.

But we have too just cause to believe and know, considering those continued designes upon Us, and the composition of the Kings Army, and of His Counsell at this time, that these things are desired, to be made use of to Our destruction, and the destruction of that which we are bound by Our Profession to defend, and woe to Us if we doe it not, to leave Our utmost endeavours in it, for the discharge of Our Duties, and the saving of our Soules, and leave the successe to God Almighty.

Therefore we the Lords and Commons are resolved to expose our Lives and Fortunes for the defence and maintenance of the true Religion, the Kings Person, Honour and Estate, the Power and Priviledge of Parliament, and the just Rights, and Liberties of the Subjects.

And for the prevention of that mischievous designe, which gives motion to all the rest, and hath bin so strongly pursued these many yeares, the altering of our Religion, which if God in his mercy had not miraculously diverted, long agoe had wee bin brought into the condition of poore Ireland, welt'ring in our own bloud and confusion.

And we doe here require all those who have any sence of piety, honour, or compassion, to help a distressed state, especially such as have taken the Protestation, and are bound in the same day with us unto their God, their King and Country, to come in our ayd, and assistance. This being the true cause for which we raise an Army, under the Command of the Earle of *Essex*, with whom in this Cause wee will live and dye.

FINIS.